

Message Text

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42

ACTION ARA-10

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: CI, PROP

SUBJECT: PRESS FREEDOM IN CHILE

1. SANTIAGO PRESS JUNE 27 CARRIES TEXT OF TELEGRAM SENT BY JUNTA PRESS SECRETARY FEDERICO WILLOUGHBY TO GERMAN ORNES, CHAIRMAN OF INTER-AMERICAN PRESS ASSN'S COMMITTEE ON FREEDOM OF THE PRESS. WILLOUGHBY CITES STATEMENT BY ORNES CONCERNING LACK OF PROGRESS TOWARDS REESTABLISHMENT OF FULL PRESS FREEDOM IN CHILE, THEN NOTES CHILEAN PRESS ASSN'S JUNE 7 VISIT TO PRESIDENT PINOCHET IN WHICH HE WAS THANKED FOR HIS CONCERN FOR HELPING MEDIA, ESPECIALLY THROUGH TAX BREAKS.

2. WILLOUGHBY WROTE: "IN CHILE THERE EXISTS A STATE OF LAW WHOSE GOAL -- IS A TRUE DEMOCRACY." POLITICAL RECESS IS REQUIRED BY EXISTING CIRCUMSTANCES, BUT NO NEW MEASURES IN THIS AREA HAVE BEEN ADOPTED.

3. "WE HAVE REITERATED THAT THERE IS NO IMPEDIMENT FOR VISITS OF JOURNALISTS TO CHILE, INCLUDING CORRESPONDENT OF 'WASHINGTON POST' WHO MAY ENTER CHILE WHEN SHE DESIRES IN SPITE OF HER REPREHENSIBLE ETHICAL CONDUCT."

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4. WILLOUGHBY CONCLUDES BY URGING ORNES TO CHECK FIRST

WITH LOCAL REP. OF IAPA ("EL MERCURIO'S" RENE SILVA) ON
"TRUE SITUATION" IN COUNTRY BEFORE ISSUING STATEMENTS ON
CHILEAN PRESS FREEDOM.

5. FOREIGN MINISTRY SPOKESMAN CARLOS ASHTON ALSO USED
REGULAR WEEKLY PRESS CONFERENCE JUNE 26 TO PROCLAIM THAT "FULL
AND ABSOLUTE FREEDOM OF THE PRESS" EXISTS IN CHILE.

6. COMMENT: IN SPITE OF THESE STATEMENTS, WE HAVE NOTED
NO CHANGE IN CONTINUING RESTRICTIONS ON CHILEAN MEDIA.
POPPER

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